

Hi Matt,

Here's the one challenge letter I have on record. This is the original, I've kept a copy for myself. When you send this to MIT, you can report that we don't have these books in our collection, so no action was taken.

If you're interested, here's the site for ALA's Banned Books Week <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/banned>

It's interesting, the heading of this letter is precisely the reason why I celebrated Banned Books Week in the library.

Allie Grundt

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**Educators have an opportunity every day to shape the future.
Stay true to your principles. Parents are depending on your support.**

Last summer the Fairhaven middle school principal approved a list of recommended titles for his 8th *grade students'* summer reading project. *Several* of the suggested titles to choose from contain *excessive* foul language and depict *multiple* sexually graphic scenes. For example:

"It opened with a woman standing on a bridge with her legs spread while a guy knelt in front of her, giving her oral sex.... I was looking needless to say. ...a woman crouched on her hands and knees while a guy knelt behind her. She kept saying 'Give it to me' and moaning...." Page 86, Looking for Alaska by John Green

"...and she grabbed his penis with her hands and started moving it.... After a few minutes, the boy pushed the girl's head down, and she started to kiss his penis...she stopped crying because he put his penis in her mouth, and I don't think you can cry in that position." The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

A letter which accompanied the list, informed parents, "...all titles might not be appropriate for all students." And, summer reading would "maintain the academic rigor..." and "...challenge students academically as we strive for excellence." These were misleading statements, based on the content of some of the suggested titles.

When did words such as f---ing, motherf---ing, masturbation, oral sex, hand job, blow job, 'giving head,' orgasm, etc., become *necessary or acceptable* vocabulary in our educational establishments? What 'academic excellence' is achieved by children who read *explicit details of minors engaging in gratuitous sex*, and illegal and immoral activities? Will children who don't read these types of books be at an academic disadvantage?

The superintendent maintained his distance by stating, "It was handled at another level." The principal offered the excuse, "There were choices." But he didn't provide an educational purpose for these being among the choices. The 'reading specialist' tried, by saying, "They are 'award winning' books." And, "Kids need to read things that aren't pretty, because life isn't perfect." Can't kids read a newspaper, without lewd language and content, to learn about ugly realities in the world?

I don't question why these books were written, that's not the issue here. I simply wonder how some educators *earnestly believe* these are the *best books* to recommend to our kids? What's the mindset of someone who recommends books that mock the breakdown of society? I don't know.

I urge you to maintain high ethical standards, rather than follow Fairhaven in its effort to promote this type of agenda.

Sincerely,



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